



THE AUDIE MURPHY NATIONAL FAN CLUB
AUDIE MURPHY - HONORARY PRESIDENT



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STAN SMITH - EDITOR
SUE GOSSETT - ASSISTANT EDITOR

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AUDIE GOT HIS STAMP! On October 14, 1999 the post office announced the issuance of an Audie Murphy commemorative 33 cent stamp in their year 2000 program. Rather than an artist's rendering, the post office used a black & white photo, apparently submitted by Mrs. Murphy. The photo was taken June 2, 1945 after Audie's Medal of Honor ceremony in Werfen, Austria. It shows a young smiling Audie, wearing a steel pot. In the lower right corner of the stamp is a color image of the 3rd Infantry Division shoulder sleeve insignia. Unfortunately, Audie's stamp is but one of four images in a block. The other three dignitaries include Alvin York, Medal of Honor recipient from World War I; Omar Bradley and John Hines. All of us preferred a full sheet of just Audie, but something is better than nothing. The reality of this stamp is due in very large part to club member Diane and James Thomason of Cash, Texas. No announcement has yet been made about the date the Murphy stamp will be issued. (Stan Smith)

SPIRIT OF AMERICA FESTIVAL, JULY 4, 1999 DECATUR, ALABAMA: The recipients of this year's Audie Murphy Patriotism Award were the Navajo Code Talkers. The Navajo code was top secret during the war and remained so until 1968. Three members of the Navajo Code Talkers Association accepted the Audie Murphy Patriotism Award. The Navajos didn't rely just on their unique language to transmit secrets; they developed a code from it and devised a phonetic alphabet because there is no Navajo alphabet or written form.

The Navajo soldiers and their secret code proved successful immediately during their first campaign on Guadalcanal. They fought in the Solomons, the Marianas, Peleliu and Iwo Jima. The entire Iwo Jima operation was directed by Navajo code, sending and receiving more than 800 messages without error. (Source: The Decatur Daily, June 27, 1999)

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR: In order for this newsletter to continue in its current format of diversity, I must hear from more members as to their experiences, feelings, stories, and opinions. I require more contributors. At present I have very little to work with for my April issue. Please let me hear from you. (Stan Smith)

STAMP UNVEILING: DALLAS, Texas - It was a standing-room-only crowd Sunday afternoon (October 24th) as family, friends and dignitaries attended the Texas unveiling of the Audie Murphy stamp that will be part of a tribute to the military issued by the U.S. Postal Service in 2000. A crowd estimated at more than 300 people spilled into the corridors of the main Dallas Post Office for the unveiling honoring the Hunt County native who was World War II's most decorated hero. Seating accommodations had been made for 120 people.

"It was exciting the minute we walked in," said Diane Thomason of Cash who launched a petition drive in 1996 to get Murphy's picture on a postage stamp. The list of names had grown to 93,112 when it was announced earlier this month that Murphy would be one of four soldiers to be part of the five-stamp series. While the first day issue of the stamp is scheduled to take place in Washington, D.C., next year, Thomason said she was told there would also be a special ceremony planned for Greenville in May. It was Greenville where the son of a share cropper enlisted in the United States Army in 1941. A fifth stamp in the series will honor Navy submarines.

Among those at the unveiling Sunday were Murphy's sisters, Nadine Murphy and Billie Tindol, and his brother, Gene Murphy. Besides Thomason and her husband, James, the local American Legion Post 17 was represented by Cloral Lovell and Adrien Witkofski. Hunt County was represented by Judge Joe Bobbitt. Thomason said there were also members from throughout the state representing the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans.

U.S. Congressman Ralph Hall of Rockwall was joined by fellow U.S. Representatives Sam Johnson, Eddie Bernice Johnson and Pete Sessions and by U.S. Senator Phil Gramm. U.S. Postal officials included Judith Principee, the legislative affairs director, and McKinney Boyd Jr. communications programs specialist and Carl January. (Source: Greenville Herald Banner - October 25, 1999)

NOTICE: In my July, 1998 (Vol. 4, No. 3) issue, page 3, I referred to Noble R. Brown's Heavenly Video in Indianapolis, Indiana who was offering various Audie movie titles. His phone number has been disconnected. I can only assume he is no longer in business. (Stan Smith)

**Suzanne Gossett: interview from Morgan Woodward
During the Memphis Film Festival, July 30, 1999**

MW: Good morning to you. Of course, I was in World War II and I knew about Audie Murphy. I was in the Army Air Corps, he was in the Infantry. I was surprised when Jimmy Cagney kind of took him under his wing, brought him to Hollywood and apparently got him started and warned him of the pitfalls and the perils of Hollywood. To go through World War II and to do what he did to become America's most decorated veteran, and then to come to Hollywood and become a star was a remarkable feat for a young kid with no more than a high school education. I assume he graduated from high school.

SG: No, he left school in the fifth grade.

MW: In the fifth grade? Well, that's really remarkable! We could get into a question and answer session here. Why did he leave? Was his family in very dire straits?

SG: One of 11 children, his father left when he was 12 and his mother died when he was 16, so he had to support the family. So he had to quit school.

MW: Well, that's even more remarkable. I didn't know that about him.

SG: It's in the book.

MW: I do recall that he came from a huge family down in Farmersville, Texas. He probably worked in the brick factory there, I don't know.

SG: He worked in the cotton fields.

MW: Cotton fields, yeah. Well, that wasn't easy. When I was a kid I picked cotton some and I didn't like it. But anyway, I met him. I did two pictures with Audie. One was "Gunpoint" and I believe the other was "Ride A Crooked Trail". As I told you yesterday, he was a loner, a very distant man. I remember that I was very anxious to meet him because; Texans have a great affinity for one another. If you're a Texan, you're just automatically a 'good ole boy', there's no question to that. But Audie was just not that way. I walked up to him and said, "Audie, my name's Morgan Woodward and I'm from Arlington, Texas" and I don't remember that he had much of a reaction at all. As a matter of fact, I think he mumbled something and walked away. (Morgan chuckling). I don't remember. I thought well, this isn't going to be a long lasting friendship. He had a small group of friends around him and we didn't have a lot of scenes together. He was the good guy and I was the bad guy. We did have one scene where I grabbed his girlfriend, Joan Staley, and put her in front of him. I apparently got away with it that time and I'm sure I got killed in the end. But I certainly enjoyed making those pictures. It was a lot of fun to work with Audie Murphy and I'm proud, very proud that I was able to do those two films with him. And that's about all I can tell you except that when I heard he was killed in a plane crash. I'm a pilot and have been flying since I was 16 years old and unfortunately he just made a wrong choice of pilots, maybe a wrong choice of airplanes. People make mistakes like that, just like John Kennedy, Jr., did. A tragic mistake. At any rate, it's a pleasure to talk with you. I was terribly, terribly saddened when I heard that Audie had been killed because I remember what I said, "A million Germans couldn't kill him but he's gone on".

I recently purchased a book at an antique mall about director John Huston's life. It is called "The Hustons" by Lawrence Grobel. In the book there are two chapters devoted to films of Audie Murphy: "The Red Badge of Courage" and "The Unforgiven". There are several interesting mentions concerning Audie:

1. One story related is a practical joke John Huston played on Audie and Burt Lancaster, who were playing golf in a local tournament. John Huston and a friend "borrowed" Audie's airplane, filled it with 2000 ping pong balls, flew it over the golf course and dropped the ping pong balls on Audie and Burt. Apparently the golf tournament was cancelled.
2. A friend of John Huston's relates how Audie couldn't sleep because he was always reliving the war, shooting Germans over and over. He couldn't sleep and they had to call a doctor once because he couldn't breathe; it was "all anguish".
3. A female friend of John Huston's states that John liked Audie very much - he admired his courage. Audie was the only one John could never "step on".

I just thought other Audie fans might like to learn a few things maybe they had not heard about before.

**Club Member DARLENE PHELPS
Thurmont, Maryland**

FOR SALE

1 copy of "To Hell and Back" from the Military Classics Series. The dust cover is slightly frayed but otherwise in great shape: \$25.00! Postage prepaid.

3 copies of "No Name on the Bullet", paperbacks, in excellent condition: \$15.00 each! Postage prepaid.

**MIKE P. WEST
4908 Cockrell Avenue
Ft. Worth, Texas 76133-1702
(817) 923-9502**

A & E is re-running their biography segment on Audie Murphy. It is available for only \$14.95. Their phone number is 1-888-708-1776. You don't want to miss having your own VHS copy.

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A TEXAS LEGEND

By club member Marlee Sordt of Stockton, Illinois
(Sung to THE YELLOW ROSE OF TEXAS)

There's a fellow raised in Texas
He was the salt of earth
A quiet kind of fellow
Who was of humble birth.

In youth he joined his nation
To meet aggression's test
And won our admiration
This hero from Celeste.*

(chorus)

He's among the finest legends
That Texas ever knew
His eyes are gray as heather
(Tho' some might say they're blue)

You may sing a song of Hopalong
Or cheer for Charles Starrett –
But the fellow raised in Texas
Is the one I won't forget!

Verse II

His eagle eye meant rabbit pie
To keep his family fed
So from day to day the wolf at bay
He kept with gun and lead.

As Europe fell he knew full well
He had to join the fray
Were his aim less true back in WWII
Would we know of him today?

(chorus)

He's among the finest legends
That Texas ever knew
His eyes are gray as heather
(Tho' some might say they're blue)

You may root for Roy Rogers,
Proclaim for Clayton Moore --
But I pick "Little Texas"
He's tops with me, that's sure!

Verse III

He went to California
In films he couldn't fail.
Made TUMBLEWEED, SIERRA,
And RIDE A CROOKED TRAIL.

Through skill with horse he stayed the course
And worked with Casey Tibbs
Made films with Sher, Bud Boetticher,
And 'specially Jesse Hibbs.

(chorus)

He's among the finest legends
That Texas ever knew
His eyes are gray as heather
(Tho' some might say they're blue)

You may holler for Hoot Gibson,
Tim Holt or William Hart –
But for me THE KID FROM TEXAS
Was my favorite from the start!

last verse

When Audie got to heaven
He was greeted with delight
By all the old-time cowboys
It must have been a sight!

He played the concertina
And sang "A Touch of Pink"
He rode along the Rio Grande
And led Joe Queen to drink.

(chorus)

He's among the finest legends
That Texas ever knew
His eyes are gray as heather
(Tho' some might say they're blue)

You may be insane for "Rocky" Lane
Or mad for Joel McCrea –
Not me – I'm wild 'bout that Texas child
Who took my breath away!

* Apologies to Floyd, Kingston, Farmersville,
Greenville, etc.

If you haven't obtained your 1997 hardbound copy of "TO HELL & BACK", it can be ordered from:

The Scholar's Bookshelf
110 Melrich Road
Cranbury, NJ 08512-3511

for only \$7.98; stock number 5FQTG. Their phone number is (609) 395-6933. I predict that this publication will be soon out of print and as difficult to obtain as the original 1949 Holt edition. Many thanks to club member Don Meyer of Oak Creek, Wisconsin.

HELP! I wish to purchase a photo of Audie Murphy with Eddie Albert from the 1958 movie, "The Gun Runners" Can anyone please help me!?

BRAD HOLIDAY
THE JEFFERSON ARMS
415 N. Tucker Boulevard. Apt. 435
St. Louis, Missouri 63101
(314) 621-3641

AUDIE MURPHY RECIPE: I am advised that "The American Cowboy Cookbook" contains a recipe on page 163 for a meal Audie created and named BEEF BANDERA. This meal was made for a friend who remembers the ingredients but not the amounts. If you wish to give it a shot, it went as follows:

- Melt butter in a frying pan
- Brown some onions
- Cut beef into 1/4" to 1/2" by 4" strips and brown them in a second frying pan
- When the onions are brown, add a can of cream of mushroom soup, plus some brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, and let it simmer for about 3 minutes
- Then add the beef strips to the mushroom mixture and cook on low for 10 min.

And that was it. For those members who wish to order the cookbook, contact Shepler's Western Wear Catalog at 1-800-835-4004. The book retails for \$14.95 and also contains an interesting 5"x 6" cowboy photo of Audie. Many thanks to club member Sheri Lehman of Llano, Texas.

AUDIE MURPHY THROUGH THE EYES OF A 15 YEAR OLD GIRL:

On my bedroom walls, amidst my movie posters and pictures of movie stars like Sean Patrick Flanery, and Brad Pitt, are photographs of my hero, whose pictures get a most common response of “Who is that guy?”

Unfortunately, I get that a lot from just about all of my peers. So, I roll my eyes at the uncultured, and tell them that he was the most decorated soldier of World War II, a Congressional Medal of Honor winner, a stellar actor of the western screen and just an all around awesome person, not to mention my hero. Come on, work with me people!

I was first introduced to Audie Murphy when AMC ran a special on him two or three years ago. All his movies all night long. I was entranced. Seriously, I did not get off that couch until five or six the next morning. I am not quite sure what drew me to him in the first place. Maybe it was his good humor, or the fact that all his inner strength could be seen just radiating from his every move and line. Or maybe it was the fact that he was just a really cute guy. I don't know. He was different from all of the teen actors of my generation, obviously. And he was more than just an actor, he was a war hero!

From that day on, Audie was a part of my life. I have a great collection of Audie's pictures, movies, and magazines, one being the famous LIFE issue that I am proud to say I saw in the Smithsonian Institution. I have visited his gravesite in Arlington Cemetery, an experience I could never forget. I own the book “To Hell and Back”, which touched me even more than the movie did. I was brought to tears when the last Golden Globe Awards named him as one of America's 100 greatest people of the 20th century. Luckily, I found a site on the Internet talking about the fan club. I am proud to be a member (probably the youngest) and I have a great deal of admiration for all the other members, especially his family. My love to all of you, and to the hero of my life: Audie Murphy. By club member Emily Walker of Dana Point, California.

A NEW BOOK ON AUDIE! “A THINKER'S DAMN” - Audie Murphy, Vietnam, and the Making of The Quiet American by Dr. William Russo. Published by Lukeion Books, Las Vegas, Nevada, this 224 page paperback book is now for sale on line at www.Amazon.com for only \$20.95 and at BarnesandNoble.com_ for \$19.95. Delivery is 3 – 5 weeks.

At long last, the full and amazing story about the first American movie foray into Vietnam, with its devastating consequences on all the involved. This book includes: the first interview in 40 years with co-star Giorgia Moll; the first major revelations from Audie's best friend, Willard Willingham; the first published comments from the diary of Oscar winning film editor, William Hornbeck; new revelations about the CIA in Vietnam; insights from the movie's Figaro Production team; the truth about Audie's near death in Vietnam; the Vietnamese perspective from associate producer, Vinh Noan; the feud between director Joseph L. Mankiewicz and author Graham Greene; and never before seen photos from behind the scenes!

SUE GOSSETT INTERVIEW WITH BEN COOPER - WILLIAMSBURG, VA - FEB. 27, 1999

Well, I first worked with Audie; it was in the early 60's. We did a movie called "Gunfight at Comanche Creek." Audie played a Pinkerton man and Jan Merlin was his fellow agent and buddy. Audie was checking on a gang that was kidnapping people and robbing banks and have the reward get higher and higher on them. Then they would kill the person and turn them in. Audie was the agent working under cover and I was one of the gang who really wanted to get out of it because I was in love with a young girl. Audie and I had a couple of quiet scenes; one out by the fence when we talked and one inside when it was getting really late at night. Apparently he was comfortable working with me and I was very comfortable working with him. We got along well. You know sometimes when you work with actors, there's a little tension here and there. You don't like his habit of doing this or that; we didn't have any of that with each other. It was just a very comfortable working relationship; riding and doing all the rest of the stuff was just fine, absolutely no problems. It worked very smoothly and I enjoyed it very much. About two years later I found myself working with Audie again.

Now I was his buddy and Audie had bad luck with buddies. When Jan was his buddy he got killed and when I was his buddy, I got killed. But I joke about it in "Gunfight at Comanche Creek" when I try to turn myself over and get the sheriff to help. I didn't know that the sheriff was in on it so he shot me in the stomach. To make it different when we did "Arizona Raiders" where Audie and I were both Arizona Rangers working under cover, Michael Dante shot me in the back, so of course that made it different. Audie and I had a few talks, very quiet and I asked him one time, I said, "Is it true that people actually pick on you in a bar or a tavern because you were a hero?" And he said, "Yeah". And that's why he didn't go out much to where people were drinking because it was just a very sad commentary on some terribly insecure people in this country who felt they should pick on him. Here was THE most decorated hero of World War II. And I had tremendous respect for him. Audie was very much a man of principal. I never heard him be inconsistent in what he said. I never heard him contradict himself about anything; he just was very straight-forward. And I think he was a far better actor than he even let on that he was. In "Red Badge of Courage" he did a wonderful job because I think John Huston really worked him and said, "Listen boy, this is what I want you to do". When Audie had somebody who believed in him and worked with him, Audie gave some wonderful performances. I think people tend to overlook that because they knew he was the war hero and they didn't realize that he really worked to become a better actor.

I always had the feeling he was a little embarrassed to be an actor. Or, put it this way, he was embarrassed to be earning money as an actor, almost as if it wasn't something quite legitimate, although those of us who earned our living in it thought it was. But I think that after all he had been through, he just didn't know whether it was being a little phony or not and he was NOT the least bit phony. There wasn't a phony bone in his body. In both pictures, we had some very quiet scenes together, just talking. In one, we were playing two people who did not know each other and were trying to get to know each other; in the second one, two people who had obviously been friends for a number of years and talking as old friends, quietly so as not to be overheard. I really enjoyed doing those really quiet scenes with Audie because he knew his lines and he was willing to rehearse and work at it and try to make it a little

better, with little innuendoes and looks and a little playing back and forth with each other. That's why I think he was a far better actor than many people gave him credit for. And that's kind of too bad because I think that he would have matured and become a really fine actor.

There was another war hero I worked with in three movies, Sterling Hayden and they didn't think he was a very good actor. He was a far better actor than people thought and then they realized that as he got older he gave better and very different performances. And I think, had he been able to stay with us, Audie would have done the same thing and would have enjoyed it very much as he got older. When he was no longer required to be the incredibly strong, stalwart hero, he could have gone into other kinds of parts. He was a gentleman, he was honest, straightforward, he kept his word and, good heavens, you can't ask for more than that in a fellow actor. I really enjoyed working with him.

Audie didn't have a lot of funny moments. I don't recall him ever trying to be funny. But I have a really weird, tilted, silly sense of humor and I think he appreciated that because that's my way of breaking any tension. If I feel that people are getting up tight or if it's been a long day, we've all been working hard and we're starting to get tired, I fight that with humor. Just a silly remark here and there. A couple of times when I did it, he'd laugh right out loud which always caught me off guard because you didn't expect him to. But more often than not, it was just a little, not quite a smirk, but a quiet little smile to let on, yeah, he knew it was funny he just wasn't going to make any noise about it.

He'd make little comments now and then because people liked to kid me. I was always terribly enthusiastic on the set, just happy to be there. I loved to be working. I've been working since I was eight years old and always thought the nicest gift you could get was a job working at what you love to do. So I was always so happy to be there. People used to kid me about that; Audie would kid a little bit about that but I don't ever recall any practical jokes, just a little kidding about my over enthusiasm, on the first one. On the second one we had a quiet working relationship. Buster Crabbe was in it, Michael Dante, George Keymas, and Ray Stricklyn who played Audie's brother. I just liked the feeling when the scene was finished that we really got across the fact that here were two people who liked each other. And sometimes the hardest thing to do as an actor is the histrionics and the big dramatic scenes, but the quiet, two people scenes and I felt that came across and sometimes that is not easy to achieve with another actor. I felt Audie was holding back, that Audie had more that he could have said or done, he just didn't quite let it out; that's what I think made him an interesting actor because you felt there was more there. I know women were intrigued with him because they always felt "Well if I got to know him, I could get him to let loose and talk and get it out of him," which is a wonderful quality, a mystery, to have and I think he had that. He was a gentleman, a good guy, I miss him. Too bad. But isn't it lucky that we had him, especially when we needed him.

THE AUDIE MURPHY RESEARCH FOUNDATION NEEDS YOUR HELP!

The AMRF newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions. The Foundation has not yet received enough in contributions to off set the cost of the printing and mailing. Each publication of their newsletter costs about \$3,500! There were insufficient funds to pay for the last issue. Unless all of us dig deep in to our pockets, the Foundation will be forced to cease publication of their exceptional newsletter. No donation is too small. They all add up and can make a difference. Please give this situation your immediate attention and remember best of all, all your donations are tax deductible! (Stan Smith)
